



The environmental management of professional football events: a survey of football managers

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1. Introduction: The role of football in tackling the challenge of environmental sustainability

With more than 3 billion fans worldwide, football is the most popular sport today thanks to its widespread practice (both at professional and amateur levels), its team-playing nature, and the lack of economic and logistical barriers that makes this sport practicable in any part of the world and in any social context. These characteristics strongly link football to ethical values such as inclusion and respect for diversity, and make it an ideal vector to root them in society. Social inclusion and respect for diversity indeed represent the core values of social responsibility of football institutions, such as FIFA and UEFA: promoting equality no matter of ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation or religious beliefs. These commitments are represented through programmes such as Equal Game and SROI through UEFA Grow, which also encourage accessibility and community development in the football world. On the other hand, environmental protection has had a slower uptake from this sector, as environmental challenges such as depletion of natural resources, pollution and climate change resulted in more stringent constraints for football events. The capacity of football to contribute to environmental sustainability has been recently highlighted also by the EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen. After the recent meeting (December 2020) between the president of UEFA Aleksander Čeferin and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen. UEFA is fully engaged with EU Commission to pursue the EU Green Deal objectives and in that meeting President Čeferin stated “UEFA shares the vision of the European Green Deal, and we are committing to it as stewards of the most popular sport in Europe. UEFA’s long-term model for European football, based on financial solidarity and values, is perfectly aligned with the European Commission’s vision for inclusive recovery and sustainability.”

Until recently, the sport sector was lagging behind in terms of proactive management of environmental impacts if compared to other economic sectors; as a result, environmental aspects were only partially managed within sport organizations and events. However, this situation is rapidly changing as environmental protection is taking on an increasingly important spot in the football agenda, at events such as Euro 2020 and Qatar 2022. The environmental impact of sport events indeed constitutes a serious challenge for the sector, as large-scale events imply significant adverse environmental externalities, especially in terms of GHG emissions, waste production and energy and water consumption. Due to the increasing environmental concern, some key actors adopted a more proactive stance on environmental sustainability. Recently, the BBC Sport published an article that reformulated the English

Premier League ranking in an environmental perspective drafted by Sport Positive Summit. The article shows that Tottenham, Arsenal, Manchester City, Manchester United and are not only the best teams on the football field, but they also pursue energy efficiency, sustainable mobility, reduction of single-use plastics and other significant environmental issues; Real Betis Balompíe and Porto FC are very committed toward carbon emissions and the need to pursue the carbon neutrality; Juventus from the season 2020/2021 will plant 200 trees every scored goal to contribute to fight climate change. In addition all the stadiums involved in pilot actions of Life TACKLE have demonstrated a strong commitment toward environmental sustainability, confirming this topic in the priorities of the management of football clubs and stadium owners.

Despite similar examples of environmental proactivity in the football world, little is known about environmental management in football organizations, such as football clubs and stadiums. Accordingly, the present research has been conducted within the framework of the EU-funded LIFE TACKLE project in order to shed light on the extent of adoption of environmental practices among football organizations, with the aim of assessing the state-of-the-art of environmental management in football. This report details the results of a survey of football managers conducted between September and December 2019. Besides the adoption of environmental management practices (both at operational and governance levels), the surveys investigated organizational capabilities and drivers of environmental proactivity in football, expected benefits of environmental management, and stakeholder engagement. Based on the survey results, the present report advances recommendations for both policy-makers and football organizations to further environmental proactivity in the football world.

We would like to thank to the National Football Associations from the countries where the highest number of questionnaires have been collected for their active participation in the spreading of this survey among managers of professional football clubs and stadium owners.

2. Method

The data showcased in the report was collected between September and December 2019, by means of a questionnaire survey developed by the researchers of the Institute of Management of the Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies. The questionnaire was anonymous and consisted of 20 close-ended questions, divided in four distinct thematic sections:

Section I – Respondents' demographics;

Section II – Motives and drivers of the adoption of environmental practices;

Section III – Adoption of environmental management practices;

Section IV – Benefits of environmental management in football organizations

The survey was submitted online, targeting managers of football organizations (both clubs and stadium owners). In order to reach the target respondents, the survey was supported by LIFE TACKLE project partners: in particular, national football federations (i.e. FIGC, SvFF and FrF) who diffused the survey among football managers in their respective countries. Additional support in the promotion of the survey was provided by European Stadium & Safety Management Association (ESSMA), and other international stakeholders, in order to increase the response rate. At the end of the data collection period, 123 usable questionnaires were collected. The large majority of respondents in the sample are football club managers, i.e. more than 80% of the sample. Only the 5.7% of the respondents identify themselves as stadium owners, while the 4.1% of the respondents are both stadium and football club managers.

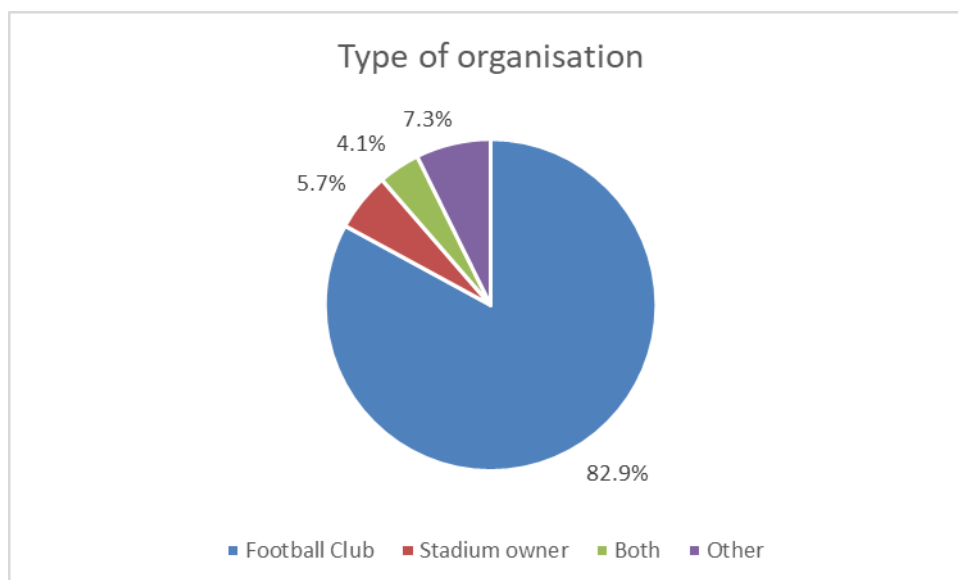


Figure 1 - Type of organisations

Given the focus of the LIFE TACKLE project on the European football sector, the large majority of respondents are European football managers. Specifically, the 34% of the sample is composed of Italian football managers, 32% are managers located in Ireland, while 14% are Swedish football managers. The sample also includes a minority of respondents from countries outside the EU, as the survey received support during the data collection process from international stakeholders. Specifically, 4% of the respondents are from Azerbaijan and 2% from Liechtenstein. Table 1 provides a breakdown of the sample in terms of location.

Table 1 – Questionnaires collected

Country	Questionnaires collected
Austria	10
Azerbaijan	5
Belgium	1
France	1
Ireland	39
Italy	42
Liechtenstein	3
Romania	3
Slovakia	1
Spain	1
Sweden	17
Total	123

In terms of organizational roles, respondents in the sample cover a wide array of positions, ranging from CEO or President to Facility or Stadium Manager. The 25% of the sample are CEO, President, or equivalent top management positions, in their sport organizations, 10% are facility managers and only the 3% of the respondents have a specific responsibility on environmental management issues in their organization (Environmental Managers). Other positions include CSR Manager, Marketing & Events Manager. Figure 2 provides a breakdown of respondents in terms of organizational role.

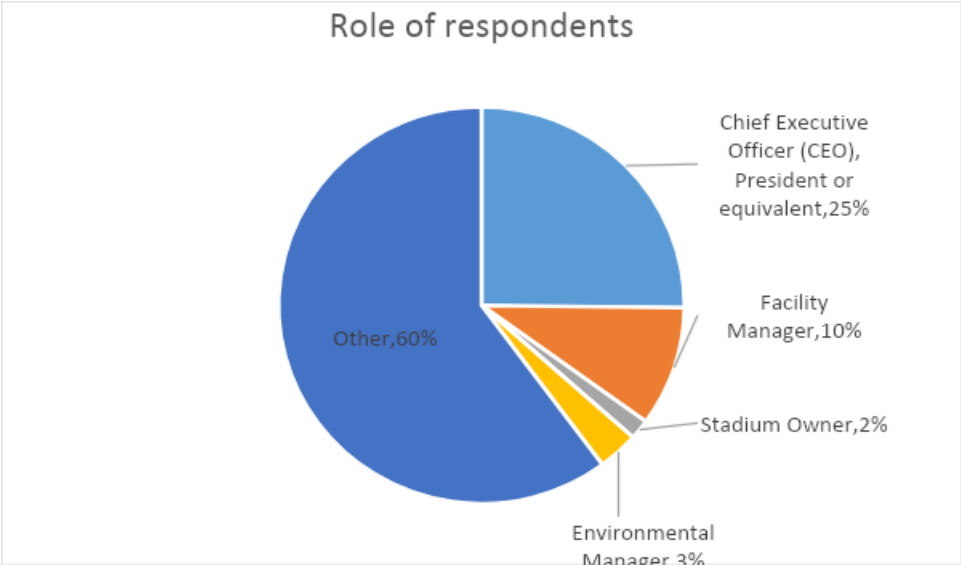


Figure 2 - Role of respondents

3. Environmental management in football: how is football reacting to the environmental sustainability challenge?

This chapter explores the self-assessment and reflections of various staff members involved in daily operations of a football club, stadium or other entities related to football. It covers several aspects of these reflections, such as (1) existing environmentally friendly practices for reducing the environmental footprint of football games, (2) the presence of environmental governance principles in daily or periodical operations and finally (3) individual actions implemented by the football entities represented by the survey respondents.

It is among the objectives of the LIFE TACKLE project to understand the current state-of-art and baseline scenarios when it comes to environmental management in football in order to be able to develop innovative, reasonable and feasible actions and strategies, and accordingly suggest them to football clubs and stadiums for their consideration. Conducting this self-assessment of operational and managerial principles and practices provides an underlying understanding of trends, motivations and willingness to improve the environmental performance of these respondents. Furthermore, the results suggest the most appropriate responses and support applicable, considering training, coaching, operational, managerial or governance actions targeting a specific field of activities and more.

The following sub-chapters will interpret the different aspects of governance and operational management in detail among the responding entities.

3.1 Environmental management: tackling environmental aspects of operations

Operations which occur in the daily functioning of a football club or a stadium are very diverse: from office and daily administrative tasks, maintenance, employees' commute to training, managing the home team and players and finally the football games themselves. All these operations have their own environmental impact which can differ from one operation to another. Some football games can easily end in an environmental impact of a medium-sized city in those 3 hours of a football game.

Being able to link environmental impacts, such as waste generation or energy consumption, mobility patterns or those caused by external parties (contractors, suppliers) already plays an important role in understanding the issue and allowing football clubs and stadiums to identify and adjust their operations and governance in order to improve their environmental performances.

This particular question is a simple self-assessment of the respondents, on existing practices aimed at reducing various environmental impacts.

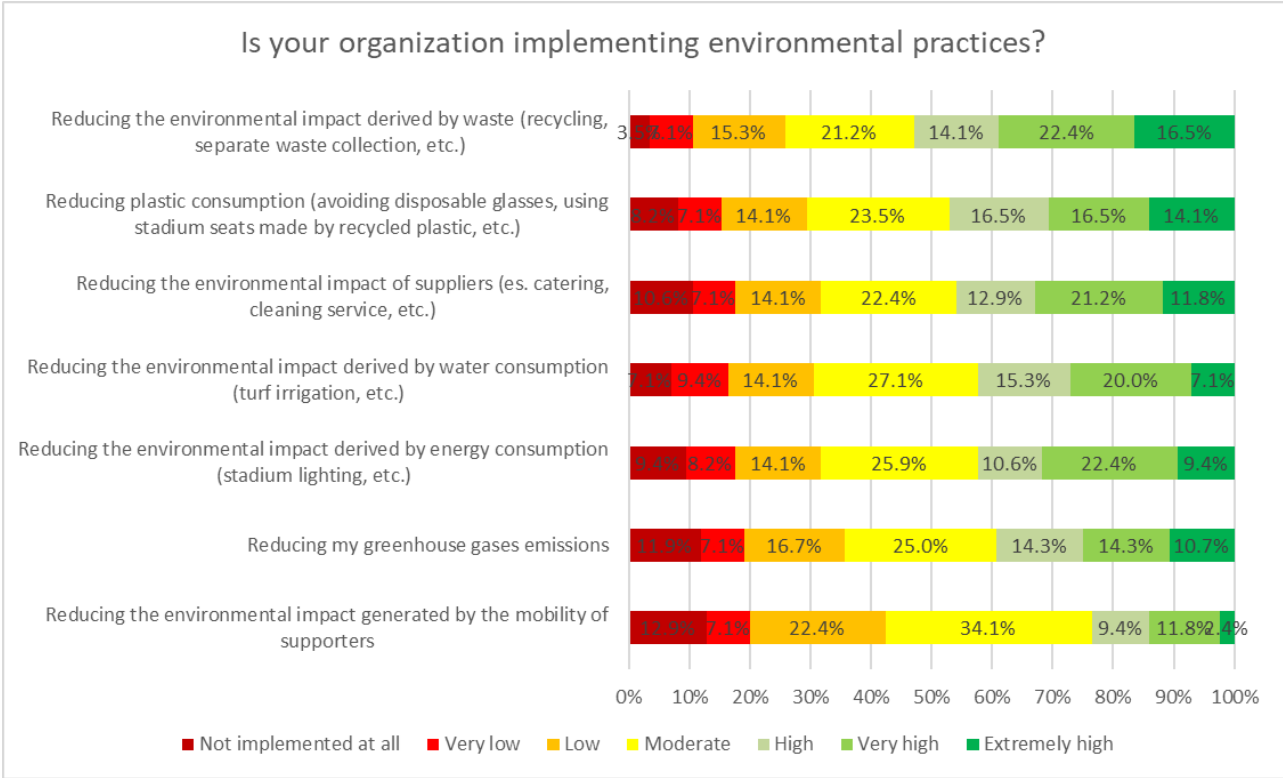


Figure 3 - Is your organisation implementing environmental practices?

What can be seen in the responses is that football clubs and stadiums already have certain environmental practices in place, to a higher or lesser extent. Reducing the environmental impacts of certain operations usually comes easier when the environmental indicators are easier to monitor. If we look at the operations which are most commonly targeted by different environmental practices they are the easiest to monitor: waste generation, plastic consumption, water consumption and energy consumption. All these operations are rather simple to be monitored through weighing or invoices on a regular time basis. The results confirm this conclusion as there are only 3.5%, 8.2%, 7.1% and 9.4% of the respondents who admitted they don't have any reducing practices for waste, plastic, water and energy in place. However, among those who have practices implemented in these areas, which is more than 90% of respondents, their efficiencies greatly vary.

On the other hand, another trend or occurrence can be identified in the figures above. Those impacts one could call passive impacts or indirect impacts, such as the impact caused by

suppliers, GHG emissions or supporters' mobility is the least tackled by the respondents. 10.6% of them have no implemented practices for reducing the impact of their suppliers, 11.9% have none for reducing GHG emissions and 12.9% have none for improving the supporters' mobility performances. The underlying reason for this could be the fact that interpreting these impacts require certain technical environmental skills and knowledge in order to translate mobility patterns into environmental impact and daily operations into GHG emissions. The sub-chapter 3.3 with its Figure 5 confirms this as a large share of respondents who confirmed they are not using enough scientific and research findings nor are in touch with such communities, this being more than 75% . Even 80% of them said that they don't undertake and R&D activities in order to improve their skills or find technical solutions to certain issues. Furthermore, the same sub-chapter 3.3 and Figure 6 show that only less than 15% of the respondents agree that hiring new employees or external consultants could improve their environmental performances. When it comes to supply chains, services or goods suppliers, many hidden environmental impacts can affect the overall environmental performance of a football club or stadium. Being externally contracted, these suppliers often don't need to report on their impacts nor follow or be subject to the club or stadium's principles. In fact, 73% of the respondents admitted in Figure 4 in sub-chapter 3.2 that they barely collect data from their service and goods providers or conduct audits on them. The Figure 5 in sub-chapter 3.3 further confirms this hypothesis, as more than 60% of the respondents engage in active dialogue with all their stakeholders and 55.3% of them disagree that such engagements could improve the overall environmental performance of a club or stadium, as shown in Figure 6 in sub-chapter 3.3.

Overall conclusion on this particular question is that certain improvements can be achieved if football clubs and stadiums are provided by technical and/or academic support in order to highlight the key fields and opportunities for improvement through setting up key performance indicators, conducting audits, improving their procurement practices through greener criteria and similar.

3.2 Environmental governance: empowering sustainability at the management level

In order to better understand the results on the implementation of various practices previously discussed, we need to look at certain managerial decisions. These decisions reflected in strategic plans, targets, environmental standards and guidelines are the ones that shape

environmental practices and in general will give the framework to the overall environmental performance of a club or a stadium.

The responses below give the key background information which further elaborate the previously discussed environmental performances and further explain those results.

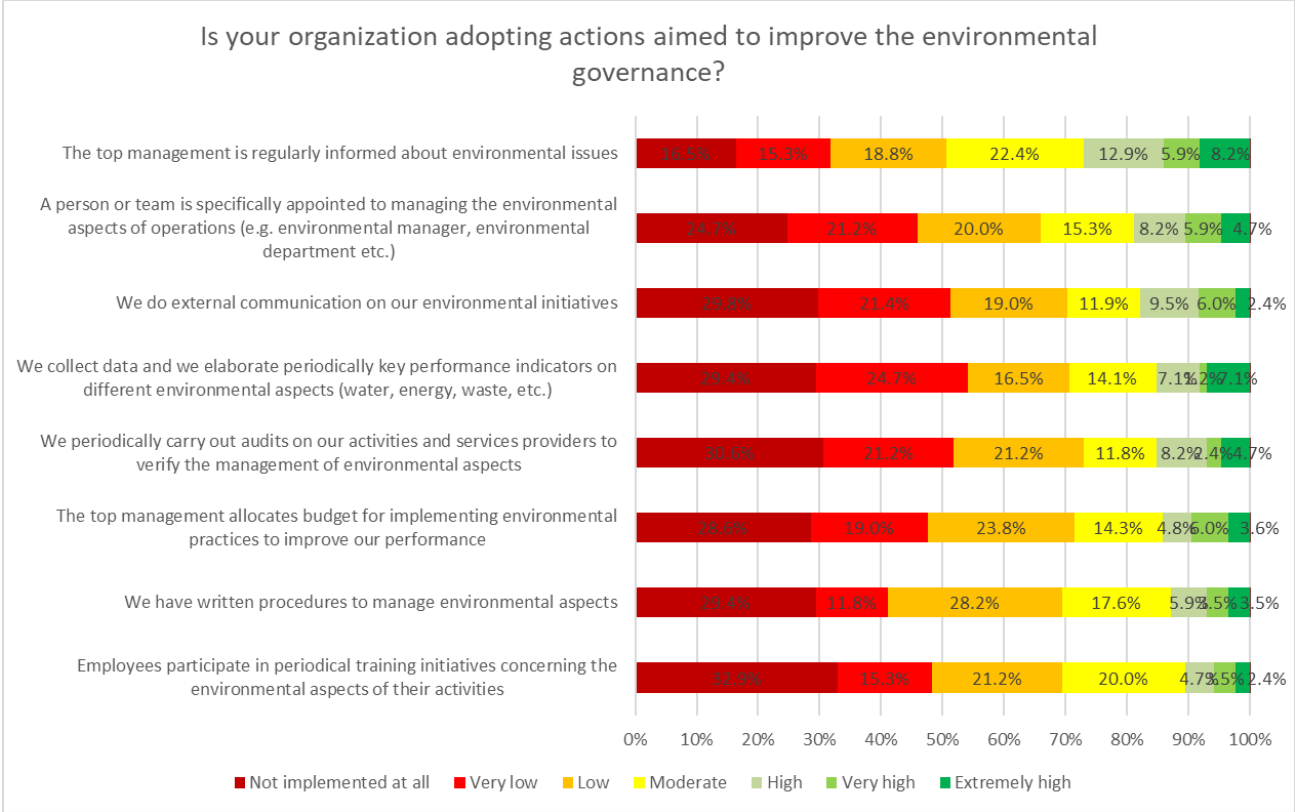


Figure 4 - Is your organisation adopting actions aimed to improve the environmental governance?

What we can see is that a rather large share of respondents, nearly 50%, have their top management regularly updated on environmental issues through various mechanisms, to a higher or lower extent. However, although top management is to some extent updated regularly, a much smaller share of respondents has a staff member appointed to deal with these issues, only 34.1%.

Only 29.5% and 27.1% of the respondents reported that they collect environmental data and KPIs and that they conduct periodic audits internally or through an external consultant. This share is even smaller (15.4% and 15.3%) if we exclude those respondents who do these activities moderately.

When it comes to some governance and management indicators, this survey showed us that a certain share of respondents has budget available for improving environmental sustainability

(28.7% of the respondents), procedures for carrying out such activities (30.5%) and employees do get to participate in training and workshops on environmental issues (30.7%). However, this share is small and corresponds to the other shares previously discussed, within the area of around 30%.

In terms of communicating their own initiatives to their external audiences, it is a rather uncommon and a very large share of respondents, 70%, admitted that this practice is rather rare or non-existent. If these results are compared to those of the *“The environmental awareness and behaviour of professional football supporters: an empirical survey”*, we can see a discrepancy between what the supporters expect and what football clubs and stadiums are doing as around 80% of supporters surveyed said that football entities should communicate their efforts for achieving higher sustainability and generally spread environmental messages through their social media, website and various advertising possibilities in the stadium.

In general, these results are pointing out that environmental principles and governance in general are rather lagging behind and aren't well established in organisational structures.

3.3 Gearing up for the challenge: developing new knowledge, skills and organizational capabilities

This sub-chapter looks into the way football clubs and stadiums identify potential improvements in terms of environmental management and activities that enable them to do so. As introducing new environmental management principles into established operations and governance is beginning to have an uptake recently, we wanted to look into the pathway of how this process is happening and what are the triggers. Furthermore, this sub-chapter also explores how the respondents adopt new ideas and identifies improvements in terms of adjusting and modifying their operations and governance. The questions appearing in this section, in Figure 5, suggesting potential enabling actions, were posed to the respondents and they were asked to indicate their level of agreement.

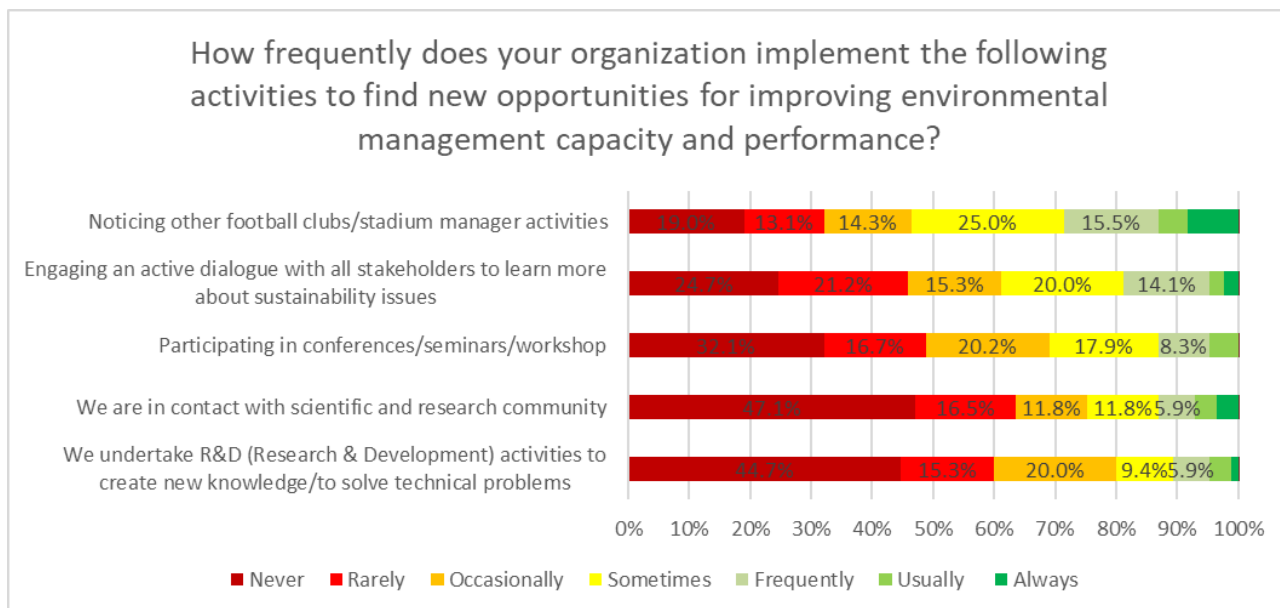


Figure 5 – Opportunities for improving environmental management capacity and performance

As mentioned earlier in sub-chapter 3.1, while more sophisticated and knowledge-based decisions made through consulting scientific and research communities or by undertaking desk-based research (R&D) activities are rather rare, other simpler activities lead to identifying potential improvements in the field of environmental management. The share of respondents confirms this conclusion, as only around 10% and 12% of them conduct their own R&D activities or are in touch with the scientific and research communities frequently or to the higher extent. In fact, 47.1% and 44.7% respectively, admitted they never do such activities at all.

On the other hand, however, a certain kind of peer motivation can be highlighted in the results, where nearly 30% of the respondents follow improvements from other stadiums or football clubs which motivate them to try them too. In this case we see that only 19% of them never did such things which leaves us with a big range of those who do it rarely, occasionally or sometimes. We expect these shares to grow, positively, as more and more stadiums and football clubs start to adopt new measures and principles and share the outcomes and experiences with others.

One activity which is obviously not explored enough by our respondents are different capacity building activities such as training, seminars, or workshops. A rather small share (up to 12%) sends their staff to such events frequently or usually. Nearly no respondents reported regular or a well-established practice like this in their entities. The reasons could be different for such a low share – either a lack of such events or a lack of staff appointed for such activities.

Monitoring and keeping a regular contact with all stakeholders involved in various operations appears here as well, but like in other cases where this could drive forward the overall environmental sustainability of a stadium or club, it doesn't seem to be explored or practiced enough, as only less than 20% of the respondents reported such activities as frequently to the higher extent.

In order to complete these findings and look at what happens once a possibility is identified, we explored how a stadium or a football club modifies its operations and governance in order to turn a possibility into action.

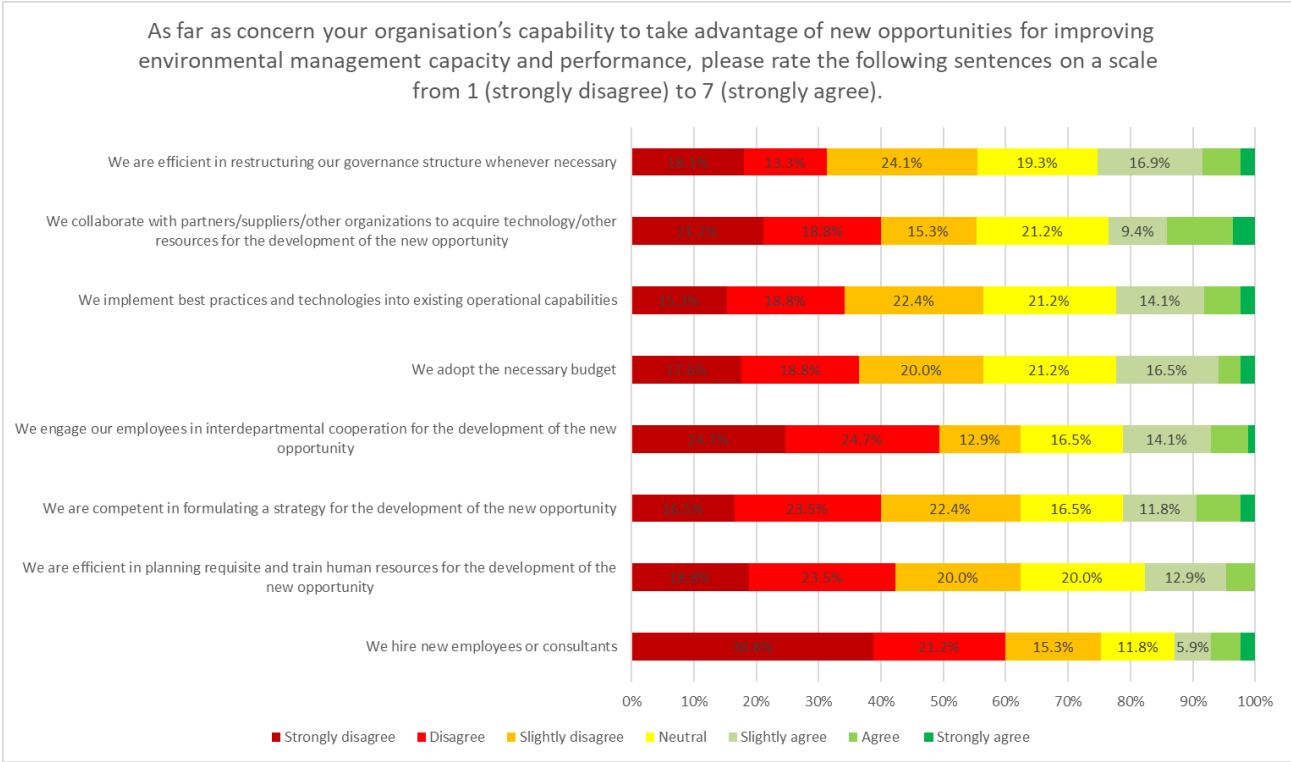


Figure 6 – Organizational capabilities for environmental management

The least common approach was through hiring a newly appointed staff member or through hiring an external consultant, as only 12.9% agree with this approach. A slightly more favoured approach reported was appointing an existing staff member to carry out the environmental duties required by providing them with necessary training, 17.7% of the respondents agree with this approach as an alternative.

In any case, 25.2% of the respondents agree that their entities need to restructure and modify their governance principles in order to adhere to new practices and ensure proper

implementation of the new environmental initiatives. What follows and accompanies this approach, such as formulating a specific strategy for the development of the new opportunity, it follows the previous share, with 21.1% of the respondents agreeing that such strategies exist in their entities. If a certain budget is necessary for undergoing certain changes or implementing new principles, 22.4% of the respondents agree that it should happen in their entities. Thus, we can see that certain accompanying measures follow the modifications in overall governance in order to allow things to happen.

What is less conclusive given the responses are the operations and whether they only get modified or completely replaced, as well as existing partnerships, sponsorships or suppliers in order to develop the new approaches and implement them. For instance, while 23.5% of the respondents agree to some extent that they collaborate with partners, suppliers or other organisations we cannot conclude whether these entities are existing ones or are there certain modifications in existing partnerships, as in replacing some or setting up completely new ones. What can be concluded from the other 55.3% of responses disagreeing with this approach (excluding neutral ones) is that this collaboration is still left out from developing the new opportunities for improving environmental performances and it is clear these respondents would rather embark on these opportunities on their own. Another varying overall response concerns the implementation of applying newly discovered best practices into the organisation. 22.3% of the respondents agree to some extent that best practices are being implemented, yet 56.5% of them (excluding neutral answers) don't believe they are. What we don't know is whether these 56.5% develop their own practices or adapt existing ones or have an approach at all.

Overall, after analysing the previous three chapters one could see that environmental management is rather lagging behind other governance and operational aspects and principles, in the form of structured approach and planned dedication. However, the introduction of these is on the rise and there are clubs and stadiums out there who are investing their time, money and human resources into developing practices, actions and holistic approaches towards this issue. These clubs can easily become forerunners in this field and show the way forward to other clubs and stadiums who are willing to mirror those innovative approaches. More projects, platforms and peer to peer exchanges can enhance this mirroring and drive forward the uptake of these innovative approaches.

However, in order to maximise these efforts, stadiums and clubs should be encouraged to dive into the field of research and development, as well as collaboration with technical experts and consultants who could make sure that the motivation of clubs and stadiums would pay off in the end and result in feasible and reasonable outcomes.

There are many approaches and options for introducing new practices and principles – either through collaboration with other stakeholders involved in daily operations (contractors, service and good providers, local and regional authorities) or allocating members of the staff to develop these internally. Although a certain share of the respondents reported that their entities work on reducing waste generation or water and electricity consumption etc., a structure approached to this including a dedicated staff member, established monitoring and more could substantially contribute to these efforts.

What clubs and stadiums should be further encouraged to do is conduct audits and other types of assessment of their operations, but also those of their supply chain including external contractors and service/good providers. These initial steps toward improving environmental management performance were proven to be effective and crucial for setting up reasonable, achievable, appropriate and purposeful measures and actions, given the experience acquired through the LIFE TACKLE project.

In order to conclude this particular chapter, we need to liaise between this survey and the one that was conducted among football supporters in Italy and Sweden within the framework of LIFE TACKLE project. Football clubs and stadiums should use the momentum and take advantage of the behavioural change that is happening in our societies. Speaking of football, supporters are ready to see their football clubs becoming greener by improving their environmental management practices and adapting their operations. Every change, every improvement is important in driving this sport toward more sustainability and clubs and stadiums should ignore the power they have in communicating messages to the external audience. It will result in higher satisfaction of those attending football games and above all lay down environmental principles and trigger changes in many other sports around the world.

4. Motivating factors and drivers of environmental management in football: the role of normative pressures and stakeholders

When asked about effective motivations that incentivize or could stimulate the organization to implement environmental management practices, football managers clearly showed a sense of responsibility towards the preservation of nature. Over half of responders (51%) strongly agreed with the statement: “it is important to protect the environment and contribute to preserve natural resource”. Another 19% agreed with this statement, 10% slightly agreed with the statement, while 10% remained neutral and 10% disagreed.

The second most influential motivation as a driver of environmental management in football is the opportunity to save costs such as through energy savings. As many as 32% of respondents strongly agree with this statement, 26% agree, and 15% slightly agree. Respondents neutral to this statement amount to 21.2%, while the rest disagrees (14%).

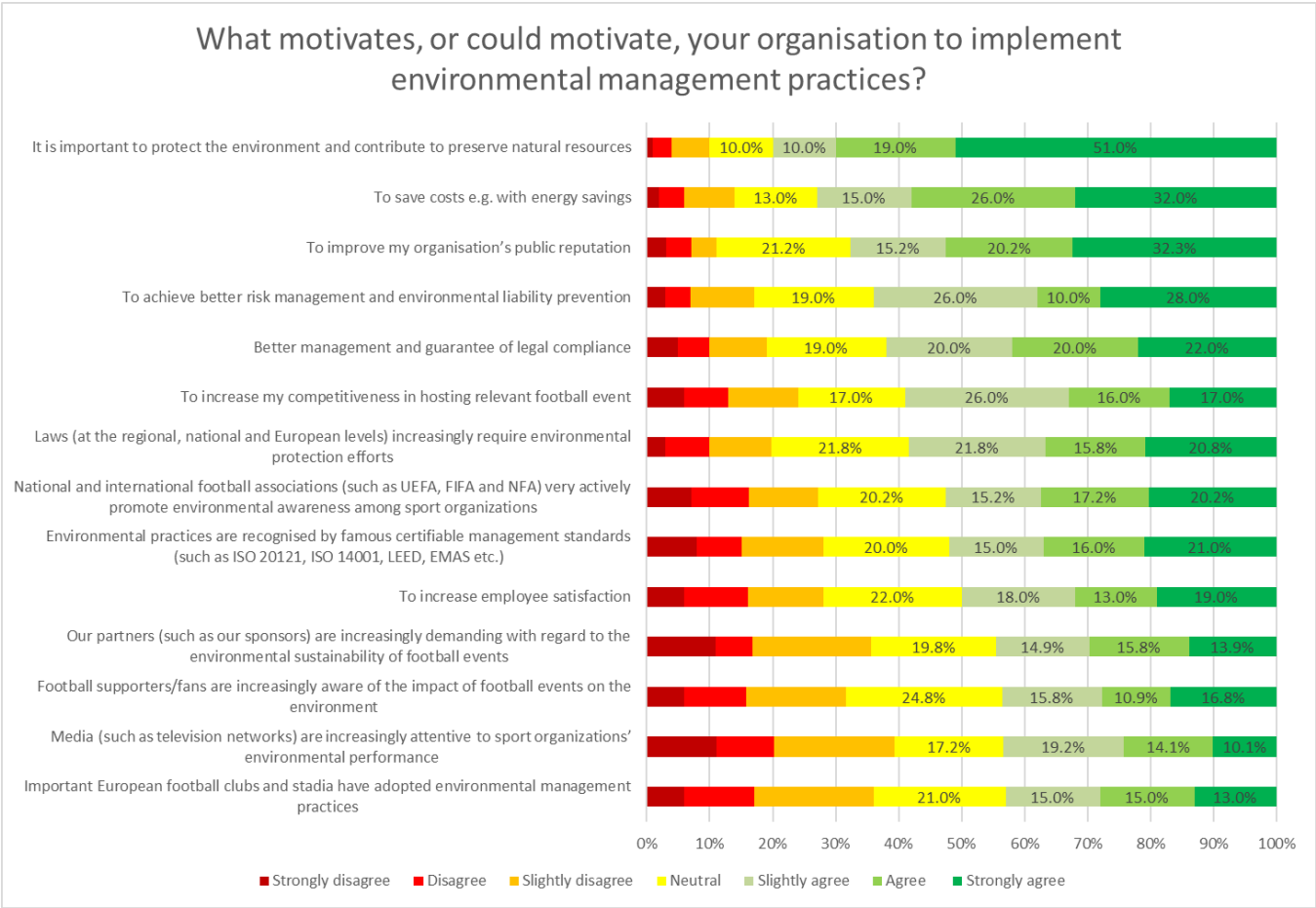


Figure 7 – Motivations for adopting environmental management practices

According to football managers, the third most popular motivation is the importance of improving the organizations' public reputation. The great majority of respondents agreed (32.3% strongly agreed, 20.2% agreed, and 15.2 slightly agreed). A share equal to 21.2% remained neutral to the statement, and the rest disagreed (11,1%).

The motivation to implement environmental management practices to achieve better risk management and environmental liability prevention is shared by 64% of respondents (28% strongly agree with the statement, 10% agree, 26% slightly agree), while 19% are neutral and the rest disagrees (17%). Some respondents strongly agree that environmental management can help improve overall management and guarantee legal compliance (22%), while others agree (20%) or slightly agree (20%). As many as 19% did not express agreement or disagreement (stated to be neutral), about 10% slightly disagreed, approximately 5% disagreed and about 4% strongly disagreed.

The sixth most popular motivation results to be the increase in competitiveness in hosting football events. A total of 17% of respondents strongly agree with this statement, 16% agree, and 26% slightly agree. Conversely, 17% are neutral, approximately 12% slightly disagree, about 7% disagree and some 5% strongly disagree. Some respondents agreed to the statement that laws, both at regional, national and European levels, are increasingly requiring environmental protection efforts (20.8% strongly agree, 15.8% agree, 21.8% slightly agree). Some 21.8% of respondents are neutral to this statement, while about 9,8% slightly disagree, approximately 7% disagrees and about 3% strongly disagrees.

Another stated motivating factor is that both national and international football associations (such as UEFA, FIFA and NFAs) are very actively promoting environmental awareness among sport organizations was strongly agreed by 20.2% of respondents, 17.2% agreed, 15.2% slightly agreed and 21.8% were neutral. Approximately 12.6% slightly disagree with this statement, about 7% disagree and almost 6% strongly disagree.

Some find that a good driver for implementing environmental management is the fact that environmental practices are both recognized and certifiable by famous management standards, such as ISO 20121, ISO 14001, LEED, and EMAS among others. The slight majority of respondents agreed that such aspects are a driver for organizations (21% strongly agree, 16% agree, and 15% slightly agree). As many as 20% are neutral, while about 13% slightly disagree, almost 6% disagree, and about 9% strongly disagree.

When respondents were asked if increasing employee satisfaction due to increased environmental management was a good driver for implementing such aspects in an organization, a total of 50% of respondents agreed (19% strongly agree, 13% agree, 18%

slightly agree). As many as 22% remain neutral, while 12% slightly disagreed, 11% disagrees and 5% strongly disagrees. Less than 50% believes that organizations are driven by an augmenting pressure created by partners, such as sponsors, with regards to environmental sustainability (13.9% strongly agree, 15.8% agree, and 14.9% slightly agree). Some 19.8% are neutral to this statement, while about 18% slightly disagree, some 6,6% disagree, and about 11% strongly disagree.

Slightly above 43% of respondents agree with the statement that football organizations are driven to implement environmental management because football supporters are increasingly aware of the impact that football events have on the environment (16.8% strongly agree, 10.9% agree, 15.8% slightly agree). 24.8% of the respondents are neutral, whilst about 15% slightly disagree, 10% disagree, and 6,7% strongly disagree.

When asked whether another driver or factor was the media, such as television networks, which are increasingly attentive to sport organization's environmental performance, 10.1% of respondents strongly agreed, 14.1% agreed and 19.2% slightly agreed. Instead, 17.2% of respondents remained neutral, while 19.4% slightly disagreed, about 9% disagreed and approximately 11% strongly disagreed. Less than half of respondents agree with the statement that a driver for implementing environmental management is that important European football clubs and stadia have adopted such practices (13% strongly agree, 15% agree, and 15% slightly agree). As many as 21% stated to be neutral, while about 19% slightly disagree, approximately 12% disagree and about 5% strongly disagree.

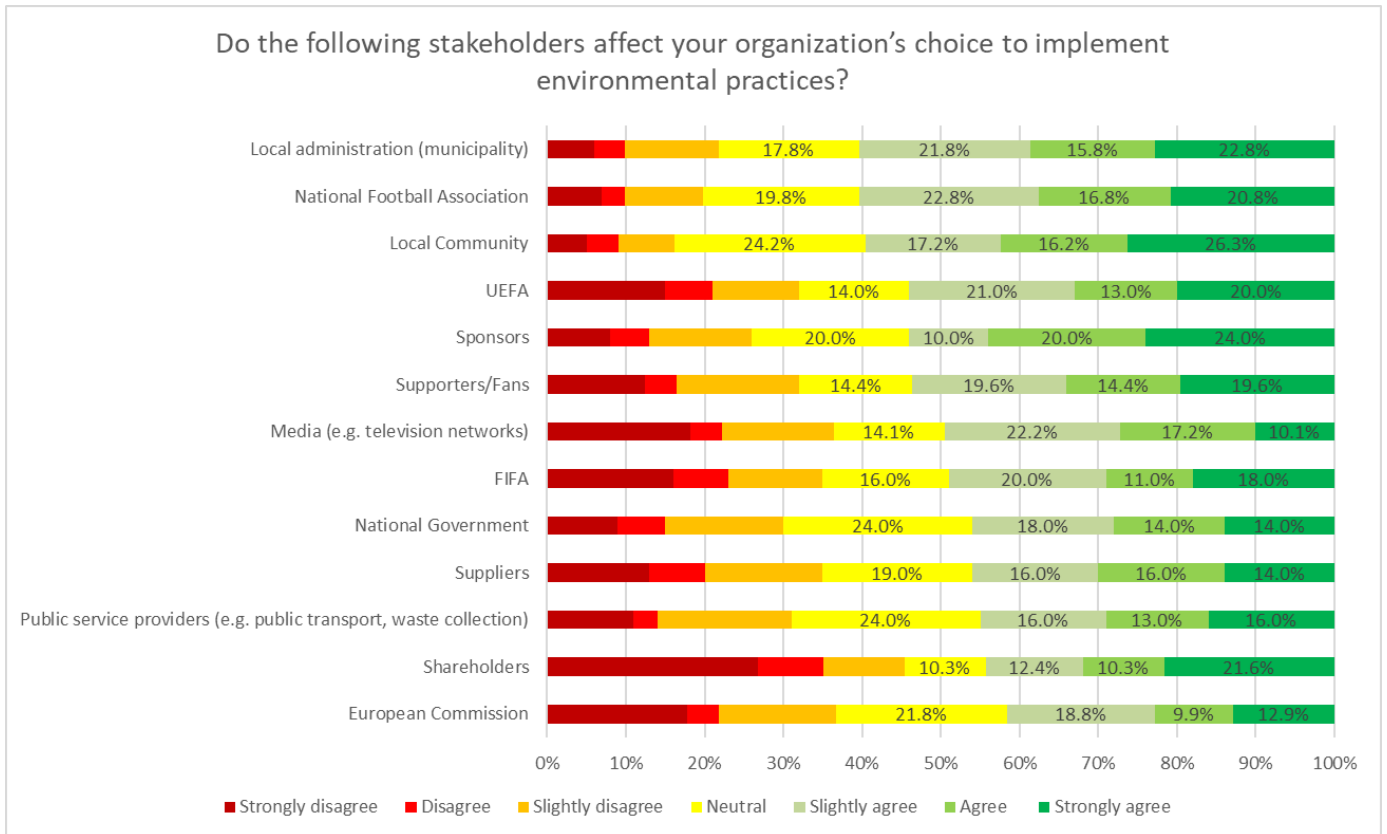


Figure 8 – The role of stakeholders

Through the survey of football managers another important finding was that the most influential stakeholders are found at local and national level. As many as 60,8% of respondents agreed that local administrations, such as municipalities are a determining stakeholder for implementing, or not, environmental management practices. As many as 22,8% of respondents strongly agreed that municipalities affect their choice to implement (or not) environmental practices, 15,8% agreed, and 21,8% slightly agreed. A minority, 17,8% of respondents remained neutral, while about 12% slightly disagreed, approximately 4% disagreed, and about 5,8% strongly disagreed.

National Football Associations have been identified as the second most influential stakeholder according to respondents. As many as 60,4% agreed that NFAs have an impact on their organization's choices with regards to the implementation of environmental management practices (20,8% strongly agree, 16,8% agree, 22,8% slightly agree). 19,8% of respondents did not provide either a positive or negative piece of feedback by choosing to remain neutral, while about 9,8% slightly disagreed, about 3% disagreed and approximately 7% strongly disagreed.

Local Community is seen as an important stakeholder for implementing environmental management practices by 59.7% of respondents (26.3% strongly agree, 16.2% agree and 17.2% slightly agree). About a quarter of respondents, 24.2%, remained neutral while about 6% slightly disagreed, about 4% disagreed and approximately 6,1% strongly disagreed. UEFA is an important stakeholder in driving football organizations to implement environmental practices for 54% of respondents (20% strongly agree, 13% agree, and 21% slightly agree). A minority, 14%, remained neutral, while about 11% slightly disagree, almost 6% disagree and as many as 15% strongly disagree.

As many as 24% of respondents stated that they strongly agree that sponsors are an important driving force. Similarly, 20% agree and 10% slightly agree. About 20% think that sponsors are a neutral factor, while about 14% slightly disagree that sponsors are impactful. Up to 5% disagree and about 7% strongly disagree. Supporters and fans are seen as an important stakeholder for affecting an organization's choice to implement environmental management practices by over half of respondents (19.6% strongly agree, 14.4% agree, and 19.6% slightly agree). As many as 14.4% of respondents stated that they are neutral, while about 15% slightly disagree, some 4% disagree and about 13% strongly disagree.

Media, such as television networks are important stakeholders for more than 49% of respondents (10.1% strongly agree, 17.2% agree, and 22.2% slightly agree), while 14.1% believe media are neutral and over 30% believe that media are not a key stakeholder for driving organizations to implement environmental management practices (about 15% slightly disagree, about 4% disagree, and 17,4% strongly disagree).

FIFA is an important driving force for 49% of respondents (18% strongly agree, 11% agree, and 20% slightly agree), while 16% believe FIFA are neutral and over 30% believe that FIFA is not a key stakeholder for driving organizations to implement environmental management practices (about 13% slightly disagree, about 5% disagree, and almost 17% strongly disagree).

National Governments are seen as an important driving force for 46% of respondents (14% strongly agree, 14% agree, and 18% slightly agree), while 24% believe National Governments are neutral and over 30% believe that they are not a key stakeholder for driving organizations to implement environmental management practices (about 15% slightly disagree, about 6% disagree, and almost 9% strongly disagree).

Suppliers are seen as an important driving force for 46% of respondents (14% strongly agree, 16% agree, and 16% slightly agree), while 19% believe Suppliers are neutral and over 30% believe that they are not a key stakeholder for driving organizations to implement

environmental management practices (about 15% slightly disagree, about 7% disagree, and almost 13% strongly disagree).

Public service providers, such as for public transport and/or waste collection, are seen as an important driving force for 45% of respondents (16% strongly agree, 13% agree, and 16% slightly agree), while 24% believe they are neutral and over 30% believe that they are not a key stakeholder for driving organizations to implement environmental management practices (about 17% slightly disagree, about 3% disagree, and almost 11% strongly disagree). Shareholders are seen as an important driving force for over 44% of respondents (21.6% strongly agree, 10.3% agree, and 12.4% slightly agree), while 10.3% believe they are neutral and over 40% believe that they are not a key stakeholder for driving organizations to implement environmental management practices (about 11,4% slightly disagree, about 8% disagree, and almost 26% strongly disagree).

The European Commission is seen as an important driving force for over 40% of respondents (12.9% strongly agree, 9.9% agree, and 18.8% slightly agree), while 21.8% believes it is neutral, and over 30% believe that it is not a key stakeholder for driving organizations to implement environmental management practices (about 16% slightly disagree, about 3% disagree, and almost 17,6% strongly disagree).

5. Expected benefits of environmental management in football: does going green pay?

In order to understand the perceived benefits of going green, football managers were asked to indicate their level of agreement with a series of statements on a scale from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”. These statements refer both to the environmental benefits in general and to the benefits for the organization itself deriving from the implementation of practices aimed at reducing the negative environmental impacts generated by the world of football.

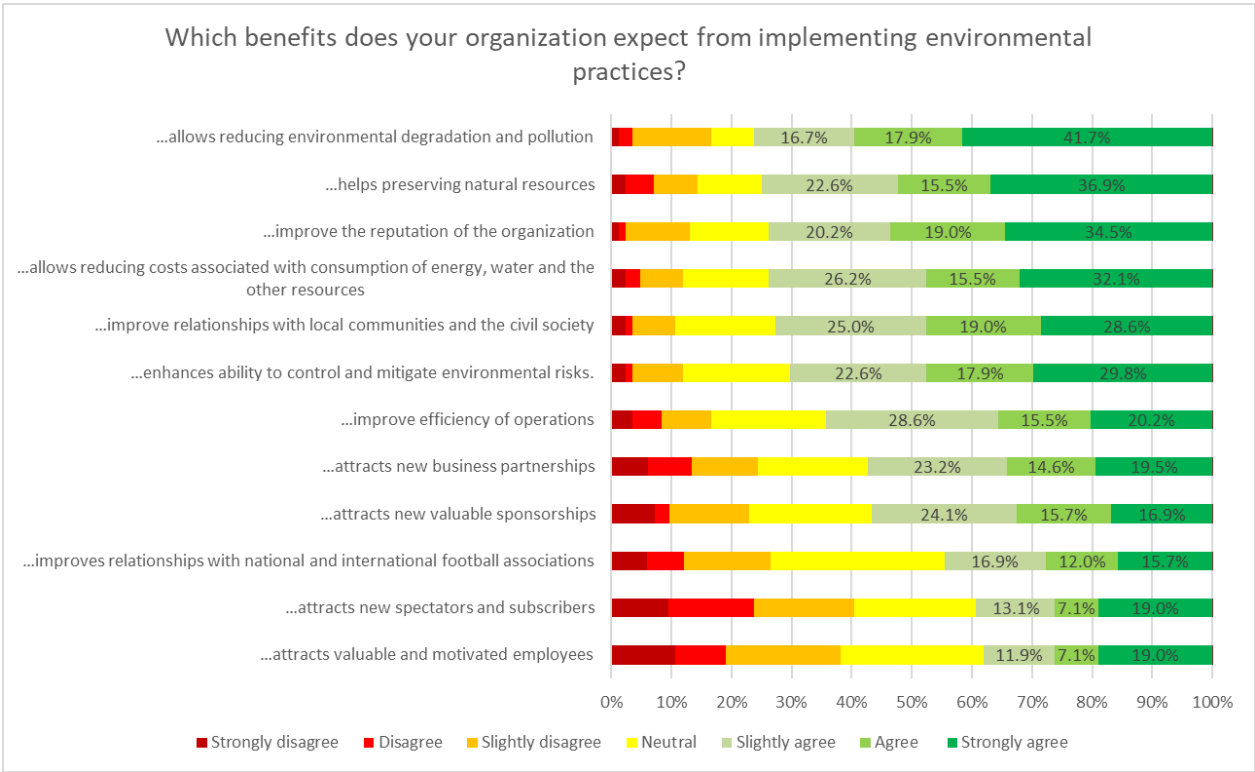


Figure 9 – Expected benefits of environmental practices adoption

Around 75% of respondents agree that implementing environmental practices first and foremost helps in reducing environmental degradation and pollution and the preservation of natural resources. Moreover, as revealed by this survey, football managers believe that implementing environmental practices also produces benefits for the organization itself – i.e. going green pays off in many ways. In terms of costs, the managers interviewed agree that going green allows the organization to save costs associated with the consumption of energy, water and the other resources (73,8 %). Moreover, they believe that implementing environmental practices improves the efficiency of operations (64,3%). Although there is often

an initial amount of money that needs to be spent for establishing green business procedures, it is perceived as an investment that will allow the entities to save money over time.

But the expected benefits are not limited to cost savings and improved efficiency. For instance, the majority of respondents (over 70%) believe that making efforts aimed at reducing environmental impacts improve the reputation of the organization and its relationships with the local community and civil society, that may perceive it as more responsible and trustworthy.

Moreover, in the world of football, and of sports in general, companies are showing a new and growing interest in the industry's sustainability work. Football managers are aware of this trend: as revealed by this survey, most respondents agree that implementing environmental practices provides business partnerships (57,3%) and sponsorship opportunities (56,7%). For instance, partners and sponsors, even if they aren't green brands, are increasingly interested in providing a positive image of themselves by showing their investments in sustainability and talking about successful sustainability initiatives alongside the enthusiasm of the football game.

A lower but still high score compared to the others is attributed to the benefits related to attracting new spectators and subscribers and to attracting valuable and motivated employees (almost 40% of respondents agree with these statements). Finally, over 40% of respondents believed that going green improves relationships with national and international football associations.

Overall the survey revealed that football managers believe that implementing environmental practices offers win-win opportunities for both the environment and their organization.

6. Engaging all relevant actors: raising supporters' environmental awareness

According to respondents the most effective awareness initiative to enhance football supporters' environmental awareness in order to improve their behaviour at the stadium with regard to environmental issues is rewarding them for pro-environmental behaviours, such as through discounts on tickets. About 19% stated that they strongly agree that a rewarding system would be effective for promoting environmentally sustainable behaviour on the part of football fans, approximately 16% agreed with the statement, 22.6% slightly agreed, while 29.8% remained neutral, about 5.6% slightly disagreed, about 4% disagreed, and about 3% strongly disagreed.

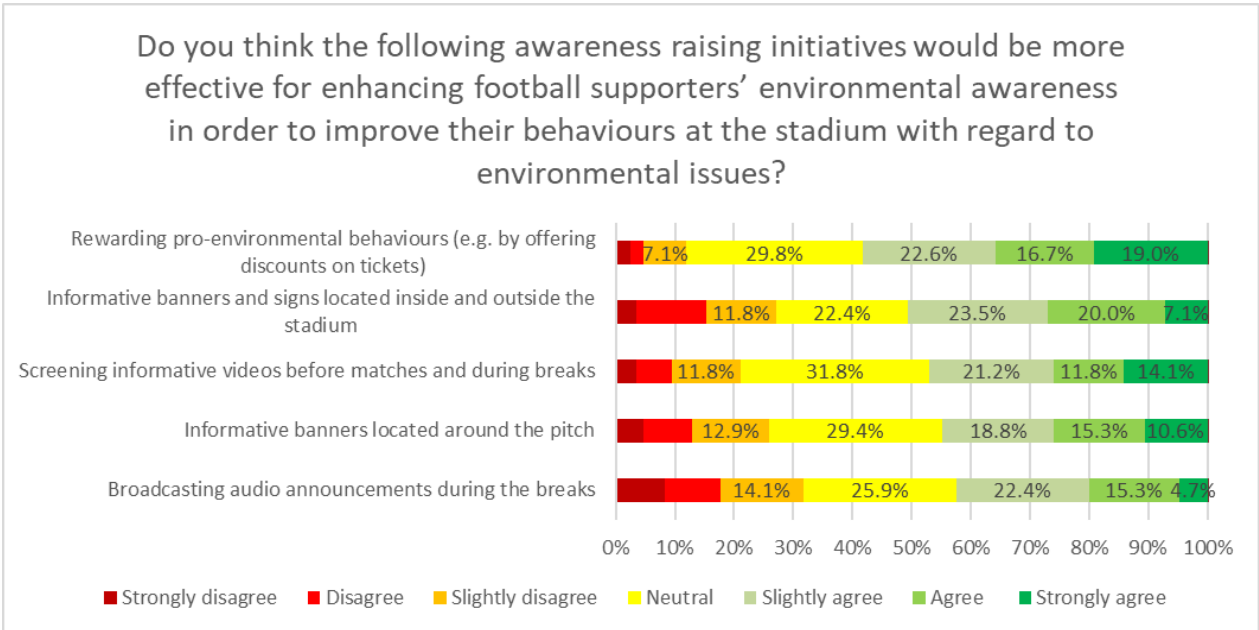


Figure 10 – Raising supporters' environmental awareness (1/2)

The second most effective initiative, according to respondents, is including informative banners and signs both inside and outside of the stadium. Over half of respondents agreed (about 7% strongly agreed, about 20% agreed, and 23.5% slightly agreed). As many as 22.4% stated to be neutral, while about 11% slightly disagree, about 12.1% disagree and approximately 4% strongly disagree. Less than 50% of respondents believe that screening informative videos before the matches and during the breaks is an effective method for raising awareness amongst football fans. About 15% strongly agreed it is an effective method, about 12% agreed, and 21.2% slightly agreed. As many as 31.8% remained neutral, while about 12% slightly disagreed, about 5% disagreed and approximately 3% strongly disagreed.

Broadcasting audio announcements during the breaks has been judged by respondents as the least effective method. Slightly above 40% of respondents believe in the effectiveness of this initiative (about 5% strongly agreed, about 15% agreed, and 22.4% slightly agreed). As many as 25.9% remained neutral, while about 13% slightly disagreed, approximately 10% disagreed and about 8.7% strongly disagreed.

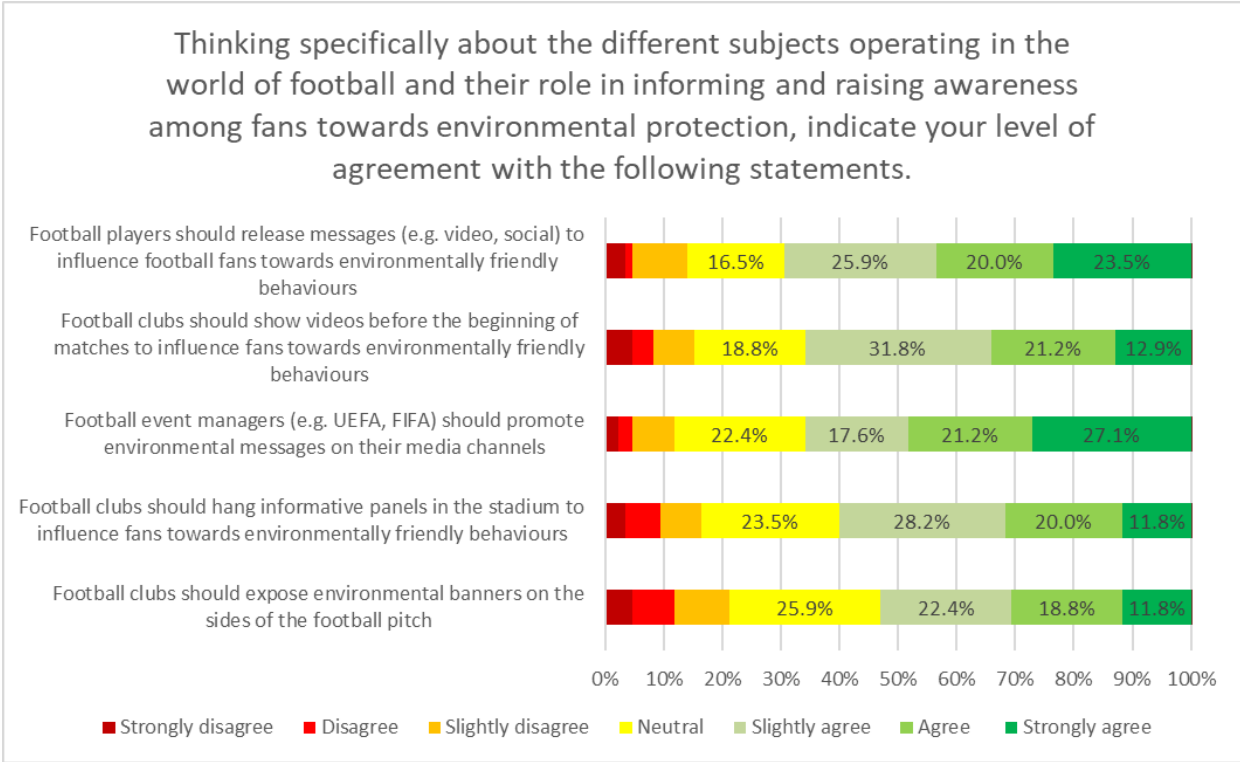


Figure 11 – Raising supporters’ environmental awareness (2/2)

When asked about the role that different subjects, operating in the football world, have in informing and raising environmental awareness amongst fans, almost 70% of respondents agreed that football players should release messages, such as videos or through the social media, to influence their fans towards environmentally friendly behaviours (23.5% strongly agreed, 20% agreed, and 25.9% slightly agreed). As many as 16.5% remained neutral, while about 10% slightly disagreed, about 1% disagreed and about 3.1% strongly disagreed.

Most respondents agreed that football clubs should show videos before the start of football matches in order to influence fans to adopt environmentally friendly behaviours (12.9% strongly agreed, 21.2% agreed, 31.8% slightly agreed). As many as 18.8% declared to be neutral, while about 9.3% slightly disagreed, about 3% disagreed, and about 4% strongly disagreed.

According to over 60% of respondents, football event managers, such as UEFA and FIFA, should promote environmental messages through their own media channels (27.1% strongly agreed, 21.2% agreed and 17.6% slightly agreed). As many as 22.4% of respondents remained neutral, while about 7% slightly disagreed, about 3% disagreed, and about 2% slightly disagreed. Precisely 60% of respondents agreed with the statement that football clubs should hang informative panels in the stadiums to influence fans towards environmentally friendly behaviours (11.8% strongly agreed, 20% agreed, 28.2% slightly agreed). As many as 23.5% remained neutral, while about 6.5% slightly disagreed, about 7% disagreed and about 3% strongly disagreed.

Over 50% of respondents agreed with the statement that football clubs should expose pro-environmental banners at the sides of the pitch during matches (11.8% strongly agreed, 18.8% agreed, and 22.4% slightly agreed). As many as 25.9% remained neutral, while about 10% slightly disagreed, about 7.1% disagreed and about 4% strongly disagreed.

7. Conclusions

This survey highlights the benefits of adopting environmental procedures, appointing staff and assigning budget to enhance reputation, protect nature, bring increased sponsorship opportunities, mitigate for future risk as well as engaging with the local community and national governments. There is willingness and a start has been made but it seems engagement with science-based communities and technical experts is currently limited and would support this work to advance further. Early adopter clubs can easily become forerunners in this field and show the way forward to other clubs and stadiums who are willing to mirror those innovative approaches. It will result in higher satisfaction of those attending football games and above all lay down environmental principles and trigger changes in many other sports around the world. Football clubs and stadiums should use the momentum and take advantage of the behavioural changes that are happening in our societies now to build trust and gain responsible reputations. It is agreed by the majority that FIFA, UEFA and the national football associations should have a key role in the roll out of best practices and guidance on environmental topics, footballers have their part to play too in communicating environmental leadership to fans and the world should be undertaken in their position of influence globally.

Two key aspects can be observed from specific sections of the survey. First, football managers demonstrated to be committed toward environmental sustainability confirming the raising interest we can observe on sport media around the topic. Figure 7 and figure 9 of this report try to explain the reason behind this interest. Football managers are engaged in environmental sustainability because they retain important to protect the environment and preserve the natural resources. This reason has been confirmed also by the expected benefits (figure 9), the most important is to achieve a lower level of pollution in the environment and a higher preservation of natural resources. These “ethical” reasons behind the choice to adopt environmental managements practices create more and more positive future expectations about the relation between football and environmental protection. Second, the commitment of football managers is currently more focused on operational aspects (waste management, water savings, mobility) of events and stadium management and less focused on internal governance of their organisations. Figure 3 shows the most adopted operational practices, while figure 4 highlights improvement opportunities in the adoption of internal organisational practices such as procedures to manage and monitor environmental aspects, environmental training of employees, identification of environmental roles and responsibilities, etc. According to our opinion, football organisations, in the next future, should aim to improve also their internal “environmental management system” in order to go on in their engagement toward environmental sustainability.